DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 339 976 CG 023 889

AUTHOR Martin, Janice E.; And Others
TITLE The Relationship among Internal-External Locus of Control and Rational-Irrational Beliefs.
PUB DATE 14 Nov 91
NOTE 10p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association (Lexington, KY, November 13-15, 1991).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Beliefs; Employees; Human Services; *Locus of Control; Personality Traits

ABSTRACT

There are many theoretical commonalities between social learning theory, especially concerning the locus of control construct, and the cognitive-behavioral underpinnings of Rational-Emotive Therapy. One's perceived ability to influence the outcomes of life events as well as the impact of perceptions and interpretations of reality in shaping the present behavior of an individual are major areas of consistency. This study investigated the relationship between Internal-External Locus of Control Scale and Irrational Beliefs Test (IBT) scores. The independent variable was locus of control, the dependent variables were IBT full-scale and subscale scores. Data were collected through administering these instruments to state human service agency employees (N=105). Statistical analyses indicated that there was a significant correlation between internal-external locus of control and IBT full-scale scores and that there were significant correlations between internal-external locus of control and 8 out of 10 IBT subscale scores. Internal locus of control subjects exhibited more rational beliefs. Likewise, external locus of control subjects maintained more irrational beliefs. Subjects with an internal locus of control tended to score lower on the IBT full-scale scores, while externally oriented subjects exhibited higher IBT full-scale scores. Additionally, internally oriented subjects tended to score lower on seven IBT subscales. Data analyses indicated that internally oriented subjects tended to have higher scores only for the perfectionism IBT subscale while the reverse was the tendency for external locus of control subjects. (LLL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED339976

THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG INTERNAL-EXTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL AND RATIONAL-IRRATIONAL BELIEFS

Janice E. Martin
University of Alabama

L. Quinn Head
Jacksonville State University

Jimmy D. Lindsey
Southern University

Henry E. Teller
Southern University

Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association

Lexington, Kentucky

November 14, 1991

CG023889

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

L. Quinn Head

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ABSTRACT

Commonalities exist between social learning and cognitive behavior theories (e.g. one's perceived ability to control life events). However, there is a lack of supportive research.

This study generated data investigating the relationship between Internal-External Locus of Control Scale and Irrational Beliefs Test's (IBT) scores. The independent variable was locus of control; the dependent variables were IBT full-scale and subscale scores. Data were collected through administering these instruments to state human service agency employees (n=105).

Statistical analyses indicated the following results: (1) a significant correlation of $r = .24$ ($p < .05$) between internal-external locus of control and IBT full-scale scores and (2) significant correlations ($p < .05$) between internal - external locus of control and eight out of 10 IBT subscale scores were obtained.

Research conclusions are internal locus of control subjects exhibited more rational beliefs. Likewise, external locus of control subjects maintained more irrational beliefs. Implications of this investigation are : (1) data support theoretical commonalities between these theories, (2) therapeutic awareness of the relationship between rational thinking and taking responsibility for one's life should be encouraged, and (3) further studies of locus of control and beliefs involving demographic variables might contribute beneficial information.

INTRODUCTION

There are many theoretical commonalities between social learning theory (Rotter, 1960), especially concerning the locus of control construct and the cognitive-behavioral underpinnings of Rational-Emotive Therapy (Ellis & Grieger, 1977). One's perceived ability to influence the outcomes of life events as well as the impact of perceptions and interpretations of reality in shaping the present behavior of an individual are major areas of consistency.

However, there is a lack of supportive research. Thus, the specific area of concern for this investigation was to generate empirical data regarding Rotter's internal-external locus of control construct and its relationship to the rational-irrational beliefs from Ellis' Rational-Emotive Therapy.

METHOD

The internal-external locus of control construct was measured by The Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (I-E Scale) (Rotter, 1966). This instrument is a "forced-choice," self-report inventory in which 29 statements are presented in true-false format including six filler items. Higgins, Moracco, & Danford (1981) indicate that scores can range from 0 to 23. Low scores indicate an internal orientation; high scores indicate an external orientation. In this research, low scores (i.e. 11 or lower) exhibited fewer external responses and high scores (i.e. 12 or higher) exhibited a larger number of external responses (Rotter, 1966).

Moderately high internal consistency coefficient values with several sample groups ranging from .65 to .79 were reported by Rotter (1966). Test-retest reliability ranged from .49 to .83 (Husa, 1982). Split-half and Kuder-Richardson reliability for total scores, clustered around .70 as reported by Anastasi (1982).

Convergent validation of the Internal-External Locus of Control Scale was supported by correlations ranging from .55 to .61 with other methods assessing the locus of control construct, such as Likert Scale, story completion, and questionnaire (Rotter, 1966). Low correlations with social desirability (e.g.-.12 to -.41) and intelligence (e.g.-.22 to .03) provide empirical evidence supporting its discriminant validation. Subsequent researchers (Harrow & Ferrante, 1969; Hersch & Scheibe, 1967, Joe, 1971) have repeatedly supported Rotter's findings; thus, additional data supports the construct validity for this instrument.

The Irrational Beliefs Test (IBT) (Jones, 1968), also a self-report inventory, assessed the rationality construct within the framework of Ellis' (1962) 10 core irrational beliefs. This instrument consists of 100 items with 10 statements measuring each of the 10 irrational-beliefs. High scores reflect more irrational beliefs; low score indicate more rational beliefs.

Cross validation of the IBT's construct validity ranged from .56 to .82 with a mean of .70 as reported by Jones (1968) in his original study. Homogeneous reliability coefficient values for this instrument were reported from .66 to .80 with a mean coefficient value of .74. IBT full-Scale and subscales' test-retest reliability over a 24-hour period were .92 and ranged from .68 to .87, respectively. Subsequent studies (Trexher and Karst, 1972, 1973 and Lohr and Bonge, 1981) reported similar reliability findings.

In this research, the independent variable is locus of control and the dependent variables are IBT full-scale and subscale scores. Data were collected through administering the aforesaid instruments to state and local human service agency employees (n=105) in which the following two null hypotheses were tested.

NULL HYPOTHESIS I
There is no relationship between internal-external locus of control as measured by scores on the Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (Rotter, 1966) and rational-irrational beliefs as measured by the full-scale score on the IBT (Jones, 1968).

NULL HYPOTHESIS II
There is no relationship between internal-external locus of control as measured by scores on the Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (Rotter, 1966) and specific rational-irrational beliefs as measured by each of the 10 subscale scores on the IBT (Jones, 1968).

A.05 probability criterion was established as the rejection level for both hypotheses.

RESULTS

The following results were obtained from analyses of data by using statistical programs from the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Null Hypothesis I

A significant positive correlation of $r = .24 (p < .05)$ was obtained between internal-external locus of control scores and the full-scale score on the IBT (Table I). Thus, this null hypothesis was rejected.

Null Hypothesis II

For 8 out of 10 correlational analyses between internal-external locus of control scale scores and the IBT subscale scores, significant correlations ($p < .05$) were obtained, of which 7 were positive. Only 1 significant correlational coefficient value was negative (see Table 1). Thus the bulk of the data analyses indicates that the rejection of this null hypothesis is an appropriate decision.

The IBT subscale No. 1, Demand for Approval, exhibited a positive correlation of $r = .18$ ($p < .05$) (Table 1) with internal - external locus of control. Subscale No 2 of the IBT, High Self-Expectations, exhibited a correlation of $r = .23$)($p < .05$) (see Table 1) with internal-external locus of control.

IBT subscale No. 3, Blame-Proneness, also yielded a significant correlation with internal-external locus of control. A positive coefficient value of $r = .18$ ($p < .05$) (Table 1) was established. Subscale No.4 of the IBT, Frustration Reactivity, exhibited a positive correlational coefficient value of $r = .18$ ($p < .05$) (Table 1) with the internal-external locus of control scale scores. The IBT subscale No. 5, Emotional Irresponsibility, also yielded a significant correlation with the internal-external locus of control construct. A positive coefficient value or $r = .30$ ($p < .05$) (Table 1) was obtained. Since $r = .10 (p > .05)$ subscale No. 6 of the IBT, Anxious Overconcern, did not yield a significant correlation with internal-extenal locus of control (see Table 1). IBT subscale No. 7, Problem Avoidance, exhibited a correlation coefficient value of $r = .19$ ($p < .05$) (Table 1) with internal-external locus of control. Subscale No. 8 of the IBT, Dependency, exhibited a nonsignificant correlation $r = -.003$ ($p > .05$) (see Table 1) with internal-external locus of control. IBT subscale No. 9 , Helplessness, exhibited a significant correlation of $r = .20$ ($p < .05$) (see Table 1) with internal-external locus of control. Subscale No. 10 of the IBT, Perfectionism, correlated negatively with internal-external locus of control. The coefficient value of $r = -.20$ was significant ($p < .05$) (see Table 1).

Table I

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients Between Locus of Control and Beliefs

	IBT Scales	Pearson r	Level of Significance
	Full-Scale	+.24	.007*
1.	Demand for Approval	+.18	.032*
2.	High Self-Expectations	+.23	.009*
3.	Blame-Proneness	+.18	.032*
4.	Frustration Reactivity	+.18	.032*
5.	Emotional Irresponsibility	+.30	.001*
6.	Anxious Overconcern	+.10	.136
7.	Problem Avoidance	+.19	.024*
8.	Dependency	-.003	.490
9.	Helplessness	+.20	.023*
10.	Perfectionism	-.20	.022*

$n = 105$

*$p < .05$

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the aforesaid results, the following conclusions are appropriate. Subjects with an internal locus of control tended to score lower on the IBT full-scale scores, while externally oriented subjects exhibited higher IBT full-scale scores. Additionally, internally oriented subjects tended to score lower on the following 7 IBT subscales: Demand for Approval, High Self-Expectations, Blame-Proneness, Frustration Reactivity, Emotional Irresponsibility, Problem Avoidance, and Helplessness. Since IBT subscales No. 6 & No. 8 (i.e. Anxious Overconcern and Dependency) did not yield significant correlations with the internal-external locus of control construct there appears to be no relationship between these specific belief categories and locus of control orientation. The data analyses indicated that internally oriented subjects tended to have higher scores only for the prefectionism IBT subscale while the reverse was the tendency for external locus of control subjects.

Thus, internally oriented subjects usually exhibited more rational beliefs, while subjects with an external orientation primarily indicated more irrational beliefs. The one exception was beliefs regarding perfectionism.

IMPLICATIONS

Since these constructs have important implications in numerous life situations and events, therapists as well as educators may find the results of this investigation beneficial. For example internally oriented people tend to think more rationally; thus, they are less susceptible to depression, anxiety and other maladaptive and behavioral disorders . In contrast externally oriented individuals tend to exhibit more irrational beliefs. Thus, they are more prone to affective and behavioral adjustment difficulties (Cash, 1984; Goldfried & Sobocinski, 1975; Lohr & Bonge, 1981; Martin et al., 1976; Nelson, 1977; Thyer & Papsdorf, 1981; Wright & Pihl, 1981). Therefore, psychotherapists may benefit from this research regarding diagnosis and prediction of personality characteristics and human behavior, respectively. Since several relationships were established between locus of control orientation and beliefs, additional investigations studying these constructs in regard to other variables (e.g. demographic characteristics) may provide valuable information leading to more effective therapeutic and educational practices.

References

Anastasi, A. (1982). Psychological Testing. NY: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc.

Cash, T. F. (1984). The Irrational Beliefs Test: Its relationship with cognitive-behavioral traits and depression. Journal of Clinical Psychology, 40 (6), 1299-1405.

Ellis, A. (1962). Reason and Emotion in Psychotherapy. Secaucus, NJ: Lyle Stewart.

Ellis, A., & Grieger, R. (1977). Handbook of Rational-Emotive Therapy. NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Goldfried, M., & Sobocinski, D. (1975). Effects of irrational beliefs on emotional arousal. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 43, 504-510.

Harrow, M., & Ferrante, A. (1969). Locus of control in psychiatric patients. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 33, 582-589.

Hersch, P. D., & Scheibe, K. E. (1967). Reliability and validity of internal-external control as a personality dimension. Journal of Consulting Psychology, 31, 609-613.

Higgins, E., Moracco, J., & Danford, D. (1981). Effects of human relations training on education students. Journal of Education Research, 75 (1), 22-25.

Husa, H. E. (1982). The effects of rational self-counseling on college students' locus of control. Journal of College Student Personnel, 23 (4), 304-307.

Joe, V. C. (1971). Review of the internal-external control construct as a personality variable. Psychological Reports, 28, 619-640.

Jones, R. G. (1968). A Factored Measure of Ellis' Irrational Belief Systems with Personality and Maladjustment Correlates. Wichita, KS: Test Systems International.

Lohr, J. M., & Bonge, D. (1981). The factorial validity of the Irrational Beliefs Test: A psychometric investigation Cognitive Therapy and Research, 6, 225-230.

Martin, R. D., McDonald, C., & Shepel, L. F. (1976). Locus of control and two measures of irrational beliefs. Psychological Reports, 39, 307-310.

Nelson, R. E. (1977). Irrational beliefs in depression. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 45 (6), 1190-1191.

Rotter, J. B. (1960). Some implications of a social learning theory for the prediction of goal directed behavior from testing procedures. Psychological Review, 67, 301-316.

Rotter, J. B. (1966). Generalized expectancies for internal versus external control of reinforcement. Psychological Monographs, 80, Whole No. 609.

Thyer, B. A., & Papsdorf, J. D. (1981). Concurrent Validity of the Rational Beliefs Inventory. Psychological Reports, 48 (1), 255-258.

Trexler, L. D., & Karst, T. O. (1972). Rational-emotive therapy, placebo, and no treatment effects on public speaking. Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 79, 60-67.

Trexler, L. D., & Karst, T. O. (1973). Further validation of a new measure of irrational cognitions. Journal of Personality Assessment, 37, 150-155.

Wright, P. G., & Pihl, R. G. (1981). Relationships between locus of control and irrational beliefs. Psychological Reports, 48 (1), 181-182.